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Women's Health Grampians committed to ending family violence

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WOMEN'S Health Grampians has chosen the theme 'Building Respectful Relationships: A community approach' for its annual general meeting and forum in Ararat on Tuesday.

The theme picks up on the Victorian and Commonwealth governments' commitment to family violence prevention, through the inclusion of respectful relationships education in the curriculum in 2016 from prep through to year 10.

The program will focus on challenging negative attitudes such as prejudice, discrimination and harassment that can lead to violence against women and in the community more broadly.

Schools play a central role in teaching young people what violence against women looks like and how it can be prevented, as well as creating a safe, equal and respectful workplace culture for school staff.

"Schools are in the privileged position to see children five days out of seven – and if they can use that access to educate and support our future generations to be respectful, nurturing adults, then – and only then - we will see a real decline in family violence," the principal of Dimboola Memorial Secondary College Anne Gawith said.

Women's Healths Grampians chief executive Marianne Hendron said the organisation aimed to support schools and communities across the region to address discrimination and promote equality as part of preventing family violence.

The keynote speaker at the forum will be Maree Crabbe, the coordinator of the community education project, 'Reality and Risk: Pornography, young people and sexuality'.



Maree Crabbe

Maree will deliver a presentation entitled 'Eroticising inequality: pornography, young people and sexuality'.

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"Pornography is an extremely problematic sex educator. It is unrealistic, and often aggressive. It's a far cry from the naked centrefold it used to be," Maree said.

"Yet porn is now the most prominent form of sexuality education for many young people; it is shaping young people's sexual understandings and expectations in ways unprecedented."

Following Maree's presentation there will be a panel discussion and Q and A session. The panel will feature Ararat Rural City's Council's Angela Hunt, St Arnaud Secondary College principal Branko Lukic, Maurice Billi from Grampians Community Health and Sarah Thistle from Family Planning Victoria.